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20 November 1981

Worldwide Report

TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICY,
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

(FOUO 15/81)



FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

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BRAZIL

BRIEFS

RADIO BROADCAST THREAT--Brazil is worried about a plan of [French Foreign Minister] Claude Cheysson's. Cheysson wants to install a powerful radio transmitter in Guyana that will cover Central America and part of South America. The Brazilian Government is afraid that this station will become a "relais gauchiste" [leftwing voice]. The French Ministry of Foreign Relations has made 60 million francs available to the TDF [French Broadcasting Corporation?] for the operation of such a station. [Text] [Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 12 Oct 81 p 31] [COPYRIGHT: 1981 "Valeurs actuelles"]

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NIGERIA

COUNTRY'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK DETAILED

Paris NEW AFRICAN in English No 167, Aug 81 pp 72, 75

[Article by Tunde Fagbenleh: "The Country's 'Nerve' Network"]

[Text] In the past five years there has been a big improvement in telecommunications in Nigeria, despite the difficulties in this field experienced by most African countries. Here, Tunde Fagbenleh reviews the struggle behind Nigeria's bid for better communications.

THE IMPORTANCE of telecommunications in the development and continued growth of 80 million people in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasised. The nation cannot successfully industrialise and run a well oiled state machinery without a functioning and co-ordinated communications network.

Black Africa has been particularly unfortunate and remains largely backward in this vital area as a result of a combination of historical, political, and economic factors which have encouraged this situation for decades. It points directly to the uphill struggle of many African countries which, impoverished by years of exploitative colonial domination, are faced with a myriad of priorities to attend to in their economic and social development.

Nigeria has emerged in the last 10 years to be an economic and political giant in Africa. The country is of increasing influence in the global scenario and the smaller and ailing African countries look up to it for leadership.

It is a country that the rest of the world would like to use as the model for analysis of what potential African countries have to reconstruct their own development and guide their own destinies.

Until 1975 the telecommunication picture in Nigeria was one of the gloomiest in the continent. The system

was modest and archaic, a leftover from the colonial past. Criss-crossing overhead cables left an unsightly Lagos skyline, and like most of the public services, the shock surprise was when the telephones worked, and not the other way around.

The service got help that year when the government under Murtala Muhammed awarded a multi-million naira contract to firms including the American conglomerate ITT, for the rectification and overhaul of what was available, and for the installation of newer, more modern lines. But what obtains in Nigeria today has not made the Murtala effort a panacea.

However, a general growth over the last five years cannot be denied in the telephone communications sector. In 1976 Cable & Wireless Ltd. of the UK was awarded a N1.9m. (US\$2m.) contract for the two-phase supply, installation and maintenance of automatic telex exchanges, providing an additional 1,440 trunk lines. The following year the same firm won a consultancy contract from Nigeria External Communications Ltd., (NET), for the laying of 450 nautical miles of coaxial submarine cables between Abidjan and Lagos as part of a trans-Nigeria network sponsored by Pan-African Telecommunications (PANAFTEL). The circuit stretches from Penmarch in France to Abidjan via Casablanca and Dakar. This link-up is a

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result of a series of agreements on telecommunications cooperation signed between Ivory Coast, France, Morocco, Senegal, and Nigeria.

So far, more than 20 new automatic telephone exchanges have been commissioned to increase the lines by another 66,550 with Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD) facilities whereby person-to-person calls can be made without an operator. Calls can now be made direct to London from Lagos by private callers.

All Nigeria's international communications are handled by NET, and, to improve connections with different parts of the country, Nigeria has embarked on construction of the second International Gateway Complex, (IGC), in Kaduna which will extend the home network as far as the northern states.

Nigeria External Communications Ltd. has also recently commissioned a computerised Message Switching Centre which automatically delivers telegrams to the closest office to the destination, and which also routes messages from selected centres to overseas addressees without the aid of an operator.

Vital nerve

Telephone facilities are gradually being distributed to more rural areas and

other urban centres are seeing an upward turn of events. Left behind is Kano State which is still encumbered with the old, inadequate system. Added to that, structural problems to the building have held up the installation of an automatic STD exchange and until another building meets required specifications, Kano, a vital commercial and industrial nerve, will remain out of reach by telephone.

The postal service is another problem area with an ugly reputation. Domestic mail still takes upward of four days to reach points in Nigeria and overseas mail takes even longer.

Radio and television have seen their own taste of problems and legal battles. Court hearings and House lobbying have finally wrested the electronic media from government monopoly. They have finally been decentralised and states can now run their own radio and television stations. The Federal fear was that slackening of the monopoly on these media would probably encourage their use for partisan and political diffusion.

Overall, Nigerian telecommunications in need of functional policies. Systems suffer considerably from breakdowns and low service maintenance and a serious lack of skilled personnel to mind the stores. Improving these services is a priority Nigeria must set its heart to in future fiscal plans and policy-making.

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NIGERIA

BRIEFS

FOREIGN CONTRACTS NOTED--Along with roads, telecommunications is one of the sectors presently in full expansion in Nigeria. It is thus that during the past months, many contracts have been concluded by French, American, West-German, and Japanese companies. An official Nigerian source indicates that: the European Teletransmission Company, subsidiary of Thompson-CSF, will install by the beginning of 1984, a centralized system to "telesupervise" the microwave telecommunication network (cost: approximately 90 million francs); Siemens AG received an order for the expansion of the telecommunication network (cost: 428 million DM, or approximately 1 billion francs); La Signalisation [name of company], subsidiary of General Telephone Engineering Company (ITT group) is in charge of installing by 1982 three local networks of telecommunication cables at Ibadan, Ado Ekiti and Akure (cost: 200 million francs); the Japanese companies Marubeni, Nippon Electric and Sumitomo, will build a shortwave telecommunication network at Ibadan (cost: 16 million yen, or 40 million francs); Cables and Wireless will furnish an electronic Eltrex V telex center of 996 lines (cost: \$3.5 million, or approximately 20 million francs); finally, the United States will deliver to Nigeria a communication satellite station (cost: \$5 million or 28 million francs). [Text] [MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1870, 11 Sep 81 p 2335] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1981.] 9670

INTERNATIONAL BANK LOAN--The Nigerian Federal Government has recently signed two loan agreements with an international banking consortium for its telecommunications development program. It should be recalled that several contracts have been signed in recent months with foreign firms for the execution of the program (see MARCHES TROPICAUX, 11 September, p 2335). [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1871, 18 Sep 81 p 2385] [COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreux et Cie Paris 1981] 11,464

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ZAIRE

MASTER PLAN FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1972, 25 Sep 81 p 2453

[Text] The master plan for the proposed systematization of Zairian telecommunications has now been prepared. It includes a long-term development plan (more or less 20 years) as well as a short-term plan (about 5 years).

One of the immediate objectives of the project is to strengthen the planning division of the Zairian National Office of Posts and Telecommunications (ONPTX) by overseas training of Zairian employees. Three foreign experts--a telecommunications consultant, a telephone systems consultant, and a transmission consultant--have been in Kinshasa for several months to help the Zairian authorities take steps necessary to the implementation of the master plan.

Over the long term, the project envisions covering the whole of Zaire with a complex transmission network as well as a network of telephone exchanges, with access to inter-city direct dialing. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) is the agency carrying out the project, preparation of which was in large part financed by the UNPD [United Nations Development Program].

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FRANCE

'PIRATE' RADIOS TO BE JOINED SOON BY 'RADIO CHIRAC'

Paris L'EXPRESS in French 16 Oct 81 pp 122-123

[Article by Philippe Aubert: "The Mayor's Transmitter Is Up"]

[Text] Radio Service Tour Eiffel ("Radio Chirac") will start broadcasting as of 1 December—"within the law and without propaganda"—while being an outpost of the opposition.

Muzzled by the law on local private radio stations, the pirates of the radio waves are beginning to rebel. They are not short of ammunition; the strongest among them, Patrick Meyer and his RFM, broadcasting from Velizy, in Yveline, are coming out with surprising surveys.

This private station, run for undisguised commercial purposes is most frequently listened to by young people in the Paris region and by several hours exceeds the listening public of France-Inter! One can thus make oneself understood with high-quality and perhaps some average programs. But RFM, which wants to live on publicity, is operating outside the law.

At the end of October RMB (Radio Mont-Blanc) will begin to broadcast. It is a big station launched on Italian territory, aiming at a heavily populated zone from Lyon to Geneva. Its manager is Roland Dhordain. Its budget is Fr 15 million. By installing its powerful transmitter on the other side of the border, in the Aosta Valley, at an elevation of 4,000 meters, RMB manages to get around the law. Along with Radio K, on the Cote d'Azur, this will be one more "peripheral" station.

The most spectacular new radio station will set up its antenna only to a height of 290 meters but it will be tied to the girders on the third floor of the Eiffel Tower. Its manager is Jacques Chirac who intends to speak for the opposition while staying within the law. Radio Service Tour Eiffel, a name preferred over Radio-Paris, which brings back some bad memories, will give the Tower back its status as the audiovisual high point. Telediffusion de France (TDF) already legally occupies the fourth floor with its armful of needle-sharp antennas and its jamming system. Just a few meters below, workers, outfitted like Alpine mountain climbers, are marking the place where the transmitter will be installed; starting on 1 December, it will send the first programs of Radio Service Tour Eiffel.

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Chirac had been thinking about this "Radio Mairie" [the Mayor's radio] for 4 years now. It was impossible under Giscard; any broadcast would have been jammed--and it would also have been considered illegal.

Hope was reborn with Mitterrand. During the first few days of July, the mayor of Paris asked Denis Baudouin to bring the project up again.

Baudouin, the director of foreign relations of the City of Paris and the mayor's right-hand man in the matter of communications, elegantly plunged into the troubled waters of the hertzian waves. This is a field which he is quite familiar with; for the past 4 years he has been running Sofirad, that powerful government company which owns RMC (Radio Monte-Carlo) and Sud-Radio, controlled by Europe 1, extending to all fields of the audio visual industry. It did not take him long to take action; in August, a 3-kilowatt transmitter was ordered from Telefunken Company.

Between Radio-Lumiere and Radio-Jet

This is one way of waiting without losing any time due to the details of the law on the free radio stations promised by Georges Fillioud, the minister of communications. In September, Baudouin however faced a major problem: the crowding of the FM band, where it was impossible to place even the smallest transmitter without stepping on your neighbor's toes. The engineers advised him to move fast and to install himself on 101.5 MHz, right between Radio-Lumiere 101, with its well-developed program, and a newcomer, Radio-Jet. The slot is very narrow, even if you have to nudge some of your less powerful neighbors.

To hold on to this spot, a provisional transmitter since 1 October has been broadcasting on a pre-recorded band, containing appeals for listeners and several carefully selected records, such as "Paris Is Waking Up." The final transmitter will be installed on 25 October. It will have cost Fr 490,000 and its power of 3 kilowatts will be divided in two, with each 1.5-kilowatt transmitter capable of relieving the other in case of failure. The office of the mayor of Paris definitely wants to stay within the law. "We want to slide along," Baudouin says rather in a jolly fashion. This will be done under the auspices of an association for the development of communications, with Jacques Chirac as president and Denis Baudouin as secretary-general. The offices and the studio are far from City Hall, just a couple of steps from the Eiffel Tower. Everything is entirely legal. So long as the Eiffel Tower Company is the owner of the transmitter, the association will only be a tenant.

Radio Service Tour Eiffel will broadcast about a dozen hours per day but never on Sunday, the people at the mayor's office expect. This will be a "radio service" which, for example, will broadcast "information on traffic bottlenecks in the morning between 0700 and 0800, section by section, minute by minute." There will also be purely local news, on the life of associations and cultural events. "No propaganda" Baudouin emphasizes once again. Still...when Jacques Chirac does something that is good for the people of Paris, will he not also comment on this into the microphone?

But the socialist camp is ruffled. Georges Sarre, the public relations advisor for Paris, commented angrily: "This radio station is a real fast move on their

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part." He said that during a cabinet meeting. It is true that the fight for municipal elections is drawing near and he who controls a radio station has a big ace in the hole.

Ridiculously Small Budget

For the time being, the government remains undisturbed. "We received an application for the amendment of a monopoly rule, we will study it, and, if it is within the law, then there will be no reason for this radio station to be jammed," it was said at the Communications Ministry.

"People will judge me by my actions," Baudouin said. "If I violate the law, well! It would suffice for TDF jamming, 10 meters above our heads, to get us within its range." This "fair play" however is not entirely innocent: the radio station of the mayor of Paris, like half a score of others in France, operated by opposition townships, is one of the outposts in the political struggle. The law on local radio stations was drafted to prevent precisely that which is happening now: a mayor's office is getting itself a radio station while remaining within the law.

With a ridiculously small budget (Fr 2 million), sheltered by legality, an opposition leader is now speaking out on the radio waves. "Elysee Palace is already trying to find out whether this yacht of the City of Paris will become a torpedo-boat," said Baudouin, not really caring whether or not he gets an answer to that.

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UNITED KINGDOM

BRIEFS

COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE FUNDING--Britain is to take a one-third share in the European space agency's 230M pound project to launch an experimental satellite which will beam communications and broadcasting signals across the whole of Europe. The project, known as L-Sat, is intended to put Europe in the running in the world market for a new generation of big multi-purpose satellites, of which about 150 are expected to be in orbit by the end of this century. L-Sat is due to be launched in 1986 and British Aerospace has been appointed prime contractor. Britain agreed to finance a third of the cost after persuading the eight other countries involved to allow the companies building the satellite maximum freedom in its design and management and in the procurement of components for it. Italy and Canada are being asked to take shares of a third and about a tenth respectively. The other participants are the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Spain and Denmark. France and West Germany, though members of the European space agency, have decided not to participate. They are collaborating instead on two broadcast-only satellites. [London FINANCIAL TIMES in English 3 Nov 81 p 1 PM] [COPYRIGHT: The Financial Times Ltd, 1981]

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